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The Monconformist Musical Journal.

A Monthly Record and Review devoted to the Interests
of Worship Music in the Nonconformist Churches.

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E are glad to announce that Mr. John Adcock, of Nottingham, so well known as a conductor of long and wide experience will shortly write a series of articles for us on choir training. We believe

these articles will be very interesting and most useful. Mr. Adcock was for many years the conductor of the Nottingham Sacred Harmonic Society, one of the best choral societies in the Midland Counties. He is the conductor of the Nottingham Nonconformist Choir Union.

The eleventh annual N.C.U. Festival held at the Crystal Palace on the 17th ult., was another success. Fortunately the weather was all that could be desired, and everyone appeared to spend a happy day. The singing heard in the competitions was again an advance, and Dr. McNaught was able to speak in very favourable terms of what he heard. This year ten choirs entered, and three prizes were awarded. It was most encouraging to notice the great contrast between the singing heard at the first of these annual competitions and that heard on the last occasion. The improvement in every respect was most marked. The choir taking part in the afternoon concert was, we believe, the largest on record. The vast orchestra was completely filled with the exception of one small corner. To view this host of Nonconformist choir singers was really in-The musical performance was upon the whole very creditable. There were slips and shaky places, and occasionally the singing was a little heavy and sombre. But when it is remembered that not more than half the singers

had been rehearsed by the conductor, and that even these had been rehearsed in comparatively small numbers, the result may be pronounced as satisfactory. Much credit is due to the singers and their respective choirmasters for having prepared the music so well. The experiment of getting a local Union to sing the verse parts in the anthems was quite a success. The Nottingham singers are to be congratulated upon their very efficient help in this direction. The Union orchestra was never in better form, their accompaniments and selections being much appreciated.

In our report of music at the Old Baptist Chapel, Rushden, reference is made to Mr. Sargent, who has been an active member of the choir for fifty-two years. We think this must be a record. If any of our readers can go one better we shall be glad to receive particulars.

Here is another true organ-blower story. There is a provincial organist who does a good deal of recital work in London. One day a gentleman was talking to the blower about this London work, and was much amused when the blower said, "We always go through all the pieces before he takes'em up to London."

Owing to the great demand upon our space this month, several reports are held over.

London Sunday School Ghoir.

ANNUAL FESTIVAL AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE.



HERE is not a seat vacant," was the observation of one of the audience at the Junior Concert. The remark might be equally applied to choir and audience; for the spacious Handel Orchestra was full, and the

audience reached back to the last row of seats, hundreds patiently standing throughout the concert, entranced by the singing of the immense choir of five thousand young people (under fourteen years of age) connected with the London Sunday-schools, and conducted by Mr. J. Rowley.

Nowhere else in the wide world can such a gathering be seen, as, year after year, with unfailing popularity successive sections of children meet and rehearse diligently in order to qualify for membership in this unique gathering. The gain to the schools who adopt the programme for their young folks' edification and delight is apparent in better singing on Sundays—the labour expended in training the children being soon repaid.

The selection of pieces is always carefully made, the words receiving special attention; indeed, it is a well-known fact that nothing puerile or unworthy would stand any chance whatever in being adopted. Healthy school songs, each laden with a lesson of kindness at home and abroad, to animals as well as to brothers and sisters, pleasing songs of foreign climes, musical pictures of flowers and birds, with other pieces of distinct religious interest constitute the fare of the London Sunday-school Choir, and the result justifies the carefulness in selecting the book.

The programme on the present occasion was as successfully rendered as on any previous festival. The opening piece was a Missionary Hymn by J. H. Maunder ("The whole wide world for Jesus"), brightly sung, followed by a tuneful setting, by E. C. Winchester, of a hymn on the Love of God ("When first we saw the sunlit skies"), W. Wright's tune to "I think when I read," a very pleasant melody, received a careful and expressive rendering. A contrast was furnished by F. C. Maker's prize tune, "In the March of Lite," which was very heartily taken up by the choir, and was received with some measure of enthusiasm. C. E. Kettle's "Buds and Bells," a pleasing song of the spring season, was taken with a delicate expression, and seemed to be popular. The first unmistakable encore was awarded to Root's "Very tired and sleepy," in which the young choristers finished up the song with heads drooped upon their neighbour's shoulder, and apparently enjoying a wellfeigned "nap." A tap of the baton brought the whole of the company up to the erect posture with an unconscious ready smile.

A pretty waltz song, "Come buy my Flowers," was not quite so well rendered as some of the earlier numbers, the repeats being in some quarters temporarily overlooked, but in spite of little hitches the was very creditably performed. Merritt's "Three Old Ladies" (Acid, Brimstone, and Sweet), seemed to please the youngsters hugely with the varying troubles and afflictions of the first two, and the happy experiences of the third. The useful "moral" that life is what we make it, will, we trust, be remembered as the years pass. A more pretentious effort was "The Arab's Farewell to his favourite Steed," an excellent song, full of beauty, but not fairly grasped by the children. The piece was sung with very fair correct ness and expression; but of all the pieces this seemed most to lack an appreciation of the spirit of the song. Any little falling off here was amply compensated for in the conductor's specially-composed "Summer Holiday." In order to heighten the effect coloured handkerchiefs were provided in three sections-red, white, and blueand the manipulation thereof formed a pleasing break in the proceedings. After singing the refrain to the accompaniment of a very hearty clap of the hands (accomplished with really remarkable precision), the hankerchiefs were raised slowly with an outward flap to each accented note until the faces of the performers were hidden, and five thousand squares of the national colours were visible, a smart removal followed by a waving to and fro to a whistling refrain earned an inevitable repeat.

A very pretty and descriptive song by F. A. Challinor, "The Swallows' Southern Home" followed, and received careful attention, leaving all the unused vigour for the last piece, Stephen Glover's "What a Merry, Merry Life we Gipsies Lead." This number received a more effective reading from the altos than any previous piece—this department being somewhat weak throughout.

A very welcome relief to the singing was provided by the skilful manipulation of the green-covered books. Moving rapidly in varying directions, the orchestra was made to have the appearance of a field of young wheat, while the two hands extended at arm's length above the head bore a very striking resemblance to a field of fully ripe corn. An interesting and remarkably effective device was the quick turning of the hands one above the other in front of the face, the children having the appearance of animated wheels. play was also furnished by means of the coloured handkerchiefs, first as a square, then a triangle, again suspended by the corner, now in motion, and again a sharp jerk, being followed by a gentle swaying-each in its way remarkable. A strange effect was produced by the handkerchief being pressed tightly against the face, leaving only the eyes and forehead visible-this exercise being remarkably well carried out.

No wonder that the enthusiastic youngsters gave their trainer a very hearty cheer when all was done, and Mr. Rowley may rest content in the affectionate regard of his very large "family," who continue to place themselves under his baton from time to time.

The Senior Section gathered later in the after-

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noon with a smaller choir, but enhanced by the London Sunday School and Crystal Palace orchestras. The The programme was, of course, much in advance of the earlier concert, but was not much in advance in the careful rendering of the pieces. Mendelssohn's stirring chorus, "Be not afraid," was perhaps the most "certain" piece of the more advanced music; although the Choral Epilogue from "The Golden Legend" went through without hesitation. The remaining items consisted of anthems by J. H. Maunder, J. L. Hopkins, and Dr. Warwick Jordan, whose "Come unto Me, ye weary" received an enthusiastic encore. "Lift thine eyes" was very well sung by the ladies of the choir; and Lord Henry Somerset's setting of "There is a green hill" was sung with a fine devotional feeling. The part-songs included Macfarren's "Break, break"

and Garrett's "Home is home," the solitary glee being Pearsall's "When Allen-a-dale."

The concert reflects the utmost credit on Mr. Whiteman, who for the first time filled the position of conductor. It is no discredit to the former occupants of the conductor's stand to say that the afternoon was as much appreciated as ever, both as regards execution and the choice of pieces.

Among the occupants of the first few rows of seats were to be noted both of the former festival conductors—Mr. Luther Hinton, looking well and hearty, Mr. Geo. Merritt, happily recovered from the breakdown in health which came upon him on the day of the festival last year, Mr. J. Barnard, the veteran secretary and manager—in addition to several friends of the choir of many years' standing.

The Student's Column.

We have arranged with an eminent musician of large experience and knowledge to take charge of this column. Questions (the envelope marked "Question") should be sent to the publisher at 29, Paternoster Row, London, E.C., by the 12th of each month if a reply is wanted in the following month's issue Each question should be on a separate sheet of paper. The Editor of this department will also report upon any hymn-tune sent to the office, provided it is accompanied by postal order for 1s, together with stamps for return of MS.; or for a fee of 2s. 6d. the tune will be carefully revised. Anthems, songs, organ or pianoforte music will be reported upon at the rate of 1s. per page, or revised at the rate of 2s. 6d. per page; an analysis of any piece, written on the copy sent for this purpose, may be had at the rate of 6d. per page, or a specially-written analysis supplied at from 5s. 6d. to 7s. 6d. according to length. Pianoforte music fingered, or organ music fingered and pedalled at the rate of 1s. per page, or 9d. per page if more than four pages.

28. CHANGEABLE CHANT.

HAT is meant by this expression, and are there any rules beyond the ordinary rules of harmony to help me in writing one?—C. C.

A changeable chant is one so con-structed as to be capable of transposi-onic minor or major key. To secure tion into the tonic minor or major key. this the triads on the supertonic and the mediant of the major key must be used with great care as they become discords when transposed into the tonic minor. The juxtaposition of the submediant and the leading note must also be avoided in the progression of any part, or we get the interval of the augmented second in the minor key. Dominant discords and chromatic sevenths on the tonic and the supertonic may be freely used, also Augmented and Neapolitan 6ths, which are common to both keys. The best plan to adopt in composing or harmonising a changeable chant is to work it in the minor key first. One of the earliest, if not the first, single chant written, by Dr. Turner (1651-1739), is generally harmonised as a chant in A.

29. NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL HARMONICS.

I am in doubt as to where to find these on the violin-Please give me a simple rule and explain the artificial harmonics?—H. V.

Natural harmonics are produced by touching the string instead of pressing it firmly down. A string touched at the place at which the 8ve of the string would be produced, speaks the unison of that note; if touched where the 5th would be produced, we get the 8ve of that 5th; if touched where the 4th would be produced, we get the 12th above that 4th; if touched at the major 3rd, the double 8ve of that major 3rd, the major 3rd above the double 8ve of that minor 3rd. Thus if we touch the G string at the place where G on the second line of the treble staff would be produced, we get the sound

of that note; if we toned the string where D below the treble staff would be produced, we get the 8ve of that note, D on the fourth line of the treble staff; and touching the G string at C, B, or B flat, the perfect 4th, major 3rd, or minor 3rd of the open string, we get G, B, and D, all above the treble staff, the 12th, 15th, and 17th of the notes respectively produced at the places touched.

Artificial harmonics are generally produced by pressing down the first finger and lightly touching the string with the fourth finger or with the third, the former method producing a harmonic, a 12th above the note made where the fourth finger touches, which must be a perfect fourth from the first finger, and the latter method producing a harmonic, a 15th above the note touched by the third finger which must be a major 3rd from the first finger. Thus, on the G string, if the first finger stop A, and the fourth finger touch D, the harmonic A, a 12th above that D sharp will be produced. Similarly, if the first finger stop A, and the third finger touch C, the harmonic produced will be C sharp on the second leger line above the treble staff, the 15th of the note touched.

30. THE ENGLISH BACH.

Who is the musician alluded to by this name, and why was he so called ?—Bachist.

Johann Christian Bach, eleventh son of the great Sebastian Bach, was but fifteen years of age at the time of his father's death. He studied under his brother, C. P. E. Bach (called Berlin or Hamburg Bach), until 1754, when he went to Milan as cathedral organist. After marrying Cecilia Grassi, an Italian prima donna, he settled in London from 1759 until his death in 1782. In London he started in conjunction with Abel concerts which were afterwards known as the Professional Concerts. He was a clever pianoforte player, but seemed to care more for the composition of operatic and light vocal music than for that of the serious works usually associated with the name of Bach.

Music at Rushden Old Baptist Chapel.



N these rushing days it is a welcome change to have under review an organisation dubbed "old." The "cause" at Rushden flourished in 1650, and the present building was in use as a place of worship when

Carey plied his shoemaker's hammer at Kettering, ten miles away. Boot-making is still the staple trade of the district, but under what different conditions! The humble shop is superseded by factories! factories!! factories!!!—one in almost every street, some supplying thousands of pairs of boots per week the year round, for the manufacture

of which the surrounding villages yield up their youth of both sexes. Although it is doubtless a disadvantage to the country districts to be thus depleted, it is a manifest advantage to the towns.

In Rushden whole neighbourhoods have sprung up within recent years, largely inhabited by these young people, and the note of the township seems to be " youth." At any rate it is a misnomer to style the Baptist Chapel "old," for never was there such a vigorous old age. For eighteen months church has been without a minister, and yet it is necessary to place chairs in the aisles on most Sunday evenings, and sometimes in the morning also-an experience which many carefully-nursed churches might

envy. The congregation consists largely of young people, and there is no "old-fogeyism" among the deacons, who, in the nature of things, have attained to a responsible age, their mature judgment acting as a counterbalance to any excess of youthful enthusiasm.

What can be said of the choir which can hear without stir an announcement of "a rehearsal at seven o'clock to-morrow morning," and which contains a member over seventy years of age, who has regularly attended for fifty-two years, and still actively participates in the work of the choir! All honour to "Father" (as his fellow members affectionately call him) Sargent, and his unique record, for we fancy that choir members at seventy-three are somewhat rare. As an example of the hard-working spirit of the choir members, we may mention that last year seventy rehearsals were arranged, and one

of the sopranos was present on sixty-eight occasions, while the average among the other members was extremely high.

The records of the choir go back for over a hundred years, at that time consisting of the usual instruments. "Father" Sargent can remember the bass-viol, etc., in actual use in the services, although the church was one of the first to adopt an organ.

Mr. Farey, whose portrait we give, has been choirmaster for over twenty-one years, having been a member of the choir since the days when he was an alto boy. His painstaking ability has been

freely placed at the choir's disposal during the period; and although the membership has several times changed since his appointment, the present singers are in no way behind the former occupants of the choir seats in their hearty appreciation of Mr. Farey's services. Three times has he led his forces to victory in competitions. The first occasion being at Wellingborough in 1894; again at the Nonconformist Choir Union Festival at the Crystal Palace (Class B) in 1896; and in October last at Northampton at the contest Northamptonshire choirs. As may be expected, the constant succession of competition work has a very highly beneficial effect on the singing of the choir.



MR. JOSEPH FAREY.

The hymns and anthems sung on the occasion of our representative's visit were well rendered in each instance, the words receiving careful treatment as regards expression, and the devotional rendering throughout was apparent and welcome. The congregation, too, seemed fairly familiar with some of the more uncommon tunes. The fact of the church being without a pastor leads to a variety in the selection of hymns. It is the plan for the officiating minister to choose the hymns, and as there are few "repeats" in the matter of supplies, constant variety is provided, while the hymns chosen are sometimes of unfamiliar metre. The people are thus oftentimes on their mettle to carry things to a successful issue, unless the minister is disappointed in his choice of hymns, a circumstance which rarely happens.

The choir consists of forty members, and the

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numi preci Sidel solois seats are arranged below the pulpit and facing the congregation. It is rather unfortunate that the seats are not raised, as some power is lost in consequence; but this is a defect which will doubtless be remedied in the new chapel, the ground for

the erection of which is already purchased. The organ is placed behind the pulpit, the keyboard being below among the choir.

The organist, Mr. George Farey—son of the choirmaster-is a painstaking and hardworking pupil of Dr. Keeton, organist of Keeton, Peterborough Cathedral, and a skilful and sympathetic executant. The instrument, concerning which Mr. Farey waxes enthusiastic, is an "Austin Universal Air-chest," the first of its kind in this country. The builders are Austin Brothers. of Detroit, U.S.A., two brothers from a neighbouring town who have brought out their invention on "the other side." The firm have formed themlately selves into a company, and it is intended to

erect a full-size organ in this country very shortly at a convenient centre.

The occasion of the provision of the instrument is of interest. It is the custom of the choir to give a performance of a large portion of "The Messiah" every Christmas, as an extra service on the Sunday nearest the Festival. The old organ on one occasion behaved very badly, and ciphered unmercifully. A member of the congregation took pity on the music, and promised to equal any amount collected within a given time on behalf of a new instrument. Two hundred pounds found their way into the coffers of the Organ Fund, and the kind donor (a lady) promptly paid in her share, and the present instrument is the result. In addition to the annual performance of "The Messiah" the choir has performed in entirety

"Samson," "Judas Maccabæus," and numerous cantatas of a high order, both secular and sacred. Doubtless the choir, and the excellent musical arrangements generally, have their part in sustaining the life of the church in the circumstances in

which it is placed, and with the advent of a popular pastor, the new building would doubtless become an urge t necessity.

In addition to the well - attended services there is a large Sundayschool of about seven hundred scholars. Mr. Farey was for some years superintendent, but now concentrates his efforts on the choir work exclusively. The school is held in a wellappointed building erected in the chapel yard. Here, week by week, past the sleeping places of former members and friends of the church, come the young people, inheritors of a sturdy spirit of self-help and independence-for which may they be gratefuland are trained to become "worthy sons of worthy sires." And when

the building is discarded for a newer one, leaving the dead to their rest, may the spirit of the fathers dwell with the children and the memory of the century of usefulness in the old building form a powerful incentive to effort in the new home.

Since the above was written the choir have taken part in competition at the Crystal Palace, organised by the Nonconformist Choir Union, on June 17th, on the occasion of the eleventh annual Festival. Their performance received very high commendation from Dr. McNaught, who awarded them the second prize. As there were only three points difference between the first and second choirs, our friends, although doubtless disappointed, may well console themselves with that fact, and, benefiting by the experience gained, "try again."



MR. WM. SARGENT.
For 521years member of Rushden Old Baptist Choir.

Glossop and District Monconformist Choir Union.

THIS Union gave an excellent concert on the 13th ult., when the Crystal Palace music was given to a very appreciative audience. The choir, numbering about 100 voices, sang with much spirit and precision, under the efficient conductorship of Mr. E. Sidebottom, Mr. H. Fielding ably accompanying. The soloists were Madame Bertenshaw, Miss Cicely

Hibbert. Mr. Joseph Howard presided, and gave a very appropriate address. Previous to the concert the choirs met in Wesley School for the purpose of presenting a handsome gold albert chain and pendant to Mr. Ellis Sidebottom, the energetic hon. sec. Mr. Fielding made the presentation, and Mr. Sidebottom suitably responded.

Notes and Echoes from the North of England.



HE programme of the forthcoming Sheffield Musical Festival, if sparse in respect of novelties, is thoroughly representative in character. On the opening day Handel's "Messiah" and Edward Elgar's "King Olaf" will be

given, Saint-Saens's "Samson and Delilah," Sullivan's "Go'den Legend" and Beethoven's Choral Symphony have been selected for the second day's gathering; and on the third and last day Parry's "King Saul" and Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise" are announced. An excellent band and chorus is available, and Mr. Manns will again conduct, assisted by Dr. Coward.

At a meeting of the Committee of the Morecambe Musical Competition it was reported that there was a credit balance of £50. Mr. J. W. Aldus, who has acted as secretary for several years, tendered his resignation, and Mr. H. Powell was elected to fill the vacant office at a salary of £15 a year.

Dr. A. L. Peace was the adjudicator at the recent competition for the position of Borough Organist at Middlesbrough. His awards were as under:—Mr. Foggitt, Middlesbrough, sixty marks; Mr. Bentham, Southport, sixty; Mr. Corbett, Middlesbrough, fifty-six; and Mr. Belcher, Leeds, fifty-five. The Corporation, working on the rule, "the lowest or any tender not necessarily accepted," appointed Mr. Corbett to fill the post.

Mr. E. H. Lemare was the recitalist at the Leeds Town Hall on June 3rd. The clever London organist played selections from Wagner, Dvorak, and other composers' works. It will be remembered Mr. Lemare was for some considerable time stationed at Sheffield, where, in truth, the foundation of his fame was laid. Another fact worthy of note is that Mr. Fricker, the present Leeds city organist, owns to having derived much benefit from Mr. Lemare's tuition during the short period he was a pupil under him, prior to his Leeds appointment.

With us in the northern districts this is the Sunday School Anniversary season. Everywhere the sound of children's songs is rampant. And what more sweet and telling than those fresh, young voices? We all know how the juvenile singers moved Haydn to tears when he visited Loadon; and surely our present-day infantile choirs wield a spell not less potent and magical.

Although essentially the children's day, the Sunday School Anniversary is often the occasion for some rare singing on the part of the regular chapel choir. Time was when at this festive gathering the services of fiddlers and wind instrument players were requisitioned. I have heard once or twice in Yorkshire the ancient serpent, and that not more than a decade back. Of course, since the general adoption of the king of instruments into places of worship the old order of things has changed considerably. And, in some respects at any rate, I do not feel disposed to murmur. Certainly our forefathers put a great deal of enthusiasm into their musical doings, but their work was invariably associated with a lot of noise.

Now the class of music selected for use on the Anniversary Day is also, to my mind, a vast improvement upon the past. Thanks to the publishers of this journal and others, there is a larger and more varied catalogue of suitable publications to choose from. But even had the majority of old choirmasters been able to pick their anniversary music from our present-day lists it is very doubtful whether or not they would have preferred our sober and tasteful productions to their more favoured ranting, yard-length choruses.

Mr. James H. M. Ledger, late of Glasgow, has been appointed organist and choirmaster of the Allerton Wesleyan Chapel. The church has just been presented with a new organ, a fine instrument.

At the Horton Lane Chapel, Bradford, on June 18th, Spohr's "Last Judgment" was given by the choir, accompanied by a small orchestra. On the same date the Hallfield Baptist Choir gave Gaul's sacred cantata "Ruth." The Girlington Baptist Choir essayed Barnby's "Rebekah" at their anniversary on June 11th.

The Choral Competitions of the month include the annual Hawes Festival on June 17th, and the Calverley contest (organised by the Wesleyan Choir) on June 24th At the former meeting choirs and societies sang selections of their own choice, while at the latter the test pieces were Batson's "Two Cupids" and Van Bree's "Youth and Love," arranged for male voices by T. Distin.

Would it be believed that in such a musically busy and enlightened centre as the West Riding of Yorkshire *Handel's* "Creation" is announced? Yet it is so!

Folkestone Monconformist Choir Union.

T the final rehearsal of this Union on the 12th ult., the members presented the Hon. Secretary, Mr. F. W. Pope, with a handsome marble timepiece in recognition of his services, Mr. Minshall, in making the presentation, referred to the great help given by Mr. Pope, and to the interest he takes in

the work of the Union. Mr. Bramley and Mr. Lepper also spoke, testifying to Mr. Pope's efficiency. Mr. Pope thanked the members for this unexpected gift. The interests of the Union were dear to his heart, and he should be glad to continue his services in the future.

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JESUS, THOU SOUL OF ALL OUR JOYS.

Anthem for Choir Festivals or General use.

Words by CHARLES WESLEY.

Music by ARTHUR BERRIDGE.

LONDON: "MUSICAL JOURNAL" OFFICE, 29, PATERNOSTER ROW. Price 2d.

TREBLE.

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LONDON "MUSICAL JOURNAL" OFFICE, 29, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

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- March), Arthur Berridge. 2d. 35. SING ALOUD UNTO GOD. A. W. Fletcher. 2d.
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- 37. COME, CHRISTIAN YOUTHS AND MAIDENS. ARTHUR BERRIDGE. 2d.

(To be continued.)

Tonic Sol-fa Editions of many of the above are already published and others are in course of preparation.

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The Eleventh Annual Nonconformist Choir Union Festival.

BY A SPECIAL REPORTER.



HE passing years bring added interest to the work of this prosperous and useful institution, which has been such a boon in developing musical activity amongst the present generation of Free Church assemblies.

In all departments of life cooperation has been a signal feature during the closing years of this remarkable century, and this banding together has incited an enormous amount of renewed vigour in religious as well as commercial spheres. The Free Churches of Great Britain exceedingly rejoice in

this prevailing idea of affiliation, which in respect to their musical undertakings has resulted in such praiseworthy progression. The N. C. U. is in its infancy only, and in the years that are to come we must look to it to place the music of our churches on a much higher level, thereby bringing its Divine influence to reach the masses, who seldom, if ever, enter the portals of the church. If so-called Christian agencies wish to exercise any hold on the rising generation they must cater for them in accordance with present-day needs and culture, otherwise secular movements will hold the field. To test the truth of this statement it will only be necessary to take a survey of our London parks on these summer Sunday evenings, where there may be found seething crowds revelling in the strains of good music, while perhaps at least half of the churches are almost empty. Church officers should open their eyes and SEE this growing

sign of the times, and act accordingly, as men with common-sense and business ideas, endeavouring to make the church the rightful home of all that is

brightest and best in the uplifting of mankind.

It is occasionally said that some large institutions exist merely for the benefit of their officers. Now this is just one of the things the Nonconformist Choir Union does not do, for be it said in all justice and thankfulness to its promoters and workers, that all services are cheerfully rendered gratuitously in a spirit which speaks far more eloquently than words. The esteemed secretary, Mr. Croger, is at times terribly "dead beat" with the strain and stress of his multifarious duties; yet withal he keeps manfully on, calling down numberless blessings on his good name.

Another work of the Union should be to foster both the "worship" and "preaching" power of music amongst the churches. Not long ago one of the best known Baptist ministers was conducting the service at a prominent South London church when, after the

choir had sung an anthem, he rose and remarked to the congregation, "Now let us worship God!" In these days of education and broadmindedness (not to say Christian charity) such treatment runs little short of insanity, hence the N. C. U. has a mission to perform in counteracting the effect of such arrant stupidity!

With the dawn of June 17th came the usual brightest of summer days, never omitted from the record of these gatherings. The Palace looks at its best, and may be said to have started a new era this year. Improvements made and now in progress tend to place it more than ever at the top of the tree as an entertainment rendezvous.

MR. E. MINSHALL.

An unusually heavy list of competitors in the "Battle of Choirs" caused proceed-ings to begin earlier than usual, so that the hour of eleven saw some familiar officers of the Union on the alert in the concert-room ready to marshal the various choirs before Dr. McNaught, who kindly acted as adjudicator. For nearly three hours musical war proceeded, a large audience being keenly interested in the fray. In class "B" (small choirs) Lancashire was to the fore, the prize being carried off by Hope Congregational Church, Denton. Of the seven large choirs (Class A), the one from Bilston Wesleyan (Staffordshire) carried off the spoils of war in the shape of the challenge shield presented by Mrs. Minshall, and a silver-mounted baton given by Mr. Croger (together with five guinea cheque from the Union), by means of which we sincerely trust the conductor, Mr. F. A. Ben-dall, will be enabled to lead his well-armed forces to even

greater victory. What yells of delight arose from their ranks when they knew of their success, and away they rushed to the Telegraph Office, where for awhile the operator had a hot time of it as he sent the glad news to the anxious friends at home. But though Bilston won it was only "by a neck," as the Rushden Baptists were almost as close up as they could be without its being a tie. Fortunately the Committee decided to give a second prize of two guineas, which went to this first-rate choir. Dr. McNaught had three hours of really hard work in listening to the various choirs. For this he deserves the thanks of all concerned, and especially for his instructive and amusing speech afterwards, which must have been a splendid lesson to the various conductors present.

Deviating from the course usually adopted the Committee thought fit to make a change this year in the publication of the "Book of Music." Thus it is we find the present book published by Mr. F. S. Turney, whose praiseworthy interest in the Union had created

for him the title of "agent," under which he pilots a large amount of work connected therewith, somewhat

to the relief of the secretary. The music was printed by Messrs. J. Curwen and Sons, and judging from the results the alteration has proved of considerable service to the Union, whilst the popularity of the book appears to have been general. The demand for copies has far exceeded that of previous years, for though as many as seven thousand were issued, there came cries for some seven hundred more, proving that the good work grows apace. Taking it as a whole the character of the music was perhaps a trifle simpler than that contained in the last few books; this, however, may have its advantages in that some of the less ambitious choirs were able to join the ranks, and thus place the Union on a yet broader basis from an educational point of view.

Punctually at four o'clock Mr. Minshall stepped up to the conductor's desk, whilst the army of singers which crowded the orchestra gave a hearty cheer of welcome. There is no wait-

ing, for the huge choir has been marshalled in most able fashion by "Captain" Jay and his sprightly able fashion by "Captain" Jay and his sprightly "Lieutenants," so up goes the baton and the following programme is under weigh :-

Anthem, "O Praise the Lord" (J. C. Marks).

Anthem, "Lift the Trumpet" (H. Smart).

Song, "Creation's Hymn" (Beethoven), |Madame Belle Cole.

Anthem, "O Clap your hands" (W. Rigby). (Selected by the Union from MSS. sent in for accep-

tance.) Chorus, "Fixed in His Everlasting Seat" (Handel).
Orchestral arrangement "Judex" (Gounod)

(from Mors et Vita.)
Motet, "Festgesang" (Mendelssohn).
Distribution of Prizes.

Part Song, "Those Evening Bells" (E. Mason). Song, "Entreat me not to leave thee" (Gounod). Madame Belle Cole.

Part Song, "Sweetly through the night" (Shelley).
March, from Abraham (Molique).
Part Song, "On the banks of Allan Water" (arranged

by J. Cornwall).

Part Song, "In the Pleasant Summer Day" (Beale).

Solo, "O Fatima" (Weber).

Madame Belle Cole.

Part Song, "The Skylark's Song" (Mendelssohn).
Part Song, "Homeward" (Leslie).
(By the Bilston Wesleyan Choir, who won the first

prize at the competition.) Choral March, "Forward gaily" (McBurney).

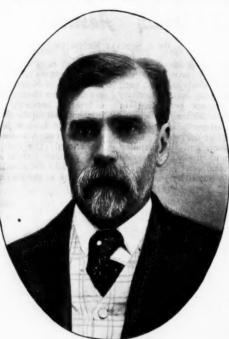
In the opening anthem the choir had a chance for some good broad singing, which was made good use of, the semi-chorus being sung most carefully and well by the members of the Nottingham N. C. U., who must have heartily appreciated the honour thus done to them. Such distinction was, however, richly deserved, for certainly no local Union can produce a better record of musical doings than this, so the fond

" parent " institution did well thus to encourage its prosperous and promising "child." Much credit is due to them, their conduc-tors, and to Mr. J. Adcock, their conductor-in-chief, for the artistic manner in which they undertook the verse and solo parts throughout the concert. Nothing could have been better.

The second number, "Lift the Trumpet," was taken with orchestral accompaniment, wherein the brasses were to the fore. With the exception of a few rather nervous entries in the choral parts of this anthem it passed off all right, and made up an effective item in the programme.

Mr. Rigby's prize anthem, "O clap your hands," fared well at the hands of the giant choir. The anthem was effectively scored for the orchestra by the composer, which, of course, lent additional force to its performance. A fine body of tone was evinced throughout, the Nottingham choir doing excellent service in

It almost goes without "Andantino" movement. saving that the Handel chorus was, as usual, a very popular number with the choirs. In this the massive sentiment of the text aroused the full ardour of the singers, who gave it out in gigantic style. So too singers, who gave it out in gigantic style. So too Britain's sons sang exultingly in Mendelssohn's "Festgesang," wherein 4,000 voices rang high, the mighty song upraising. This suited the choral forces to a nicety, and withal it was indeed a "lofty Song of Praise," making a grand conclusion to the sacred portion of the programme. The several bright and tuneful part-songs in the second half made up some pleasant musical fare, prominent amongst the selections being Shelley's "Sweetly through the night." This was specially scored for the orchestra by Mr. A. L. Cowley in most delightful form, and certainly helped in a great measure to make it one of the most attractive pieces ever performed by the Union. The solo portions were daintily sung by the Nottingham ladies who managed to hold their own even against such a tremendous array of choristers, though, be it said to their great credit, the latter were more than usually considerate in the *pianissimo* passages, and they accompanied the fair dames of Nottingham in truly graceful style. Throughout this charming piece much beautiful and careful singing was manifested right on to its conclusion, which made really a magnificent climax, at once thrilling and impressive. It was getting rather warm when we reached the "Banks of Allan Water," and if the imagination of such a cool retreat did not temper the heat the sweetly melodious strains made us forget it awhile as we drank in the pleasant harmonies which Mr. John Cornwall has entwined about this delightful old English song. The choir then cheerily bade us revel "In the Pleasant Summer Day." Then "The Skylark" took up the strain, and soon the choral army marched "Forward gaily together," which made a triumphant finish to the programme.



MR. T. R. CROGER.

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Madame Belle Cole, always popular, received quite an ovation as she beamed on the admiring throng.

Her powerful voice is well suited to such a huge auditorium, which is almost as bad as the open-air for solo work. After her several solos she called forth long and enthusiastic applause. Her kindly assistance thankfully appreciated by

the Union.

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Mr. Fountain Meen's organ accompaniments were all in his best style, and there is no better to be had. Some accompanists are often eager to lead, but Mr. Meen is always great enough to accompany, though he never lags behind. Always on the spot, so to speak, and yet one scarcely knows he is there, an accompaniment almost to be felt rather than heard.

As for Mr. Croger and his gallant Band—well, space won't allow us to put it all down. So much might be said about the amount of work entailed at rehearsals, and about the energy and interest he puts into the work at all times that any word of thanks or appreciation which we can

here set forth seems utterly inadequate to meet the case. At the concert he led his forces with great care, and their playing was much enjoyed in the several pieces rendered, whilst Madame Cole expressed entire satisfaction with her accompaniments.

The following choirs took part in the Festival:-METROPOLITAN CHOIRS.

Bow-Harley Street Congregational; Roman Road Congregational; Burdett Road.

Buckhurst Hill—Wesleyan. Camden Town—Park Chapel. Chingford-Congregational.

City—City Temple.

Clapton-Downs Chapel. Crouch Hill-Presbyterian.

Dalston-Wesleyan. Ealing-Congregational.

Finsbury-Whitefield Tabernacle, City Road.

Fulham-Dawes Road Congregational.

Highbury Hill-Baptist. Hackney-Mare Street.

Holloway-Caledonian Road Congregational.

Kingston-Congregational. Lewisham-Congregational. Orange Street-Congregational.

Paddington-Craven Hill. Peckham-Avondale Unitarian.

Plumstead—Station Road; Village Wesleyan; Plumstead Common Wesleyan; Robert Street Primitive Methodist.

Ponder's End-Congregational. Poplar-Trinity Congregational.

Regent's Park Chapel. Iterian. Stoke Newington-Abney Congregational; Presby-Stockwell-Baptist.

Stratford-Trinity Presbyterian.

Sydenham-Baptist.

Tottenham-High Cross Congregational; Wesleyan; Tottenham Nonconformist Temperance Choir.

Walthamstow — Trinity

Congregational; Wood Street.

Walworth-Walworth Rd. Baptist: York Street. Wandsworth Rd.-Victoria

Baptist.

Woodford (S.) - George Lane Congregational.

PROVINCIAL Nonconformist Choir Unions.

Burton-on-Trent. Ipswich. Coventry. Kettering. Chepstow. Nottingham, Dover. Oldham. Folkestone. Oswestry. Hadleigh. Sandy. St. Neots. Stockport. Walsall, Swadlincote (Burton-on-Trent).

PROVINCIAL CHOIRS.

Accrington-Cannon Street

Baptist.

Addingham-Mount Hermon Wesleyan Reform. Ashton-under-Lyne — Mossley Wesleyan; Ryecroft Congregational Chapel. Barnoldswick—Wesleyan.
Bilston—Wesleyan.
Birmingham — Selly Oak
Primitive Methodist;

St. Andrew's Presbyterian.

Blackburn-Great Harwood Congregational. Blackpool—Alexandra Road Congregational; Union Baptist; Shaw Road U.M.F.C.; Adelaide Street U.M.F.C.; Methodist New Connexion.

Brierfield-Baptist; Wheatley Lane Wesleyan.

Bromley (Kent)-Baptist.

MR. FOUNTAIN MEEN.

Cambridge—Emmanuel.
Chelmsford—London Road Congregational.

Colne-Burnley Road Independent; Primitive Methodist; Wesleyan; Congregational.

Chisworth - Wesleyan. Compstall-Wesleyan.

Crewe-Trinity Wesleyan.

Denford-Wesleyan.

Denton-Hope Congregational; United Methodist Free Church.

Gainsborough-Primitive Methodist.

Glossop—Littlemoor Independent; Wesleyan Circuit; Primitive Methodist; Wesleyan Reform; Whitfield Ebenezer.

Grimsby-United Methodist Free Church.

Hadfield-Primitive Methodist.

High Wycombe-Oxford Road Primitive Methodist.

Heanor-Primitive Methodist.

Heywood-Bridge Street Primitive Methodist: Wesleyan and Hopwood U.M.F.C.; York Street Congregational; Bagslate United Methodist Free Church.

Higham Ferrers—Wesleyan. Hollingworth—Congregational; Methodist New Connexion.

Hyde-Newton Methodist New Connexion; Newton Moor Methodist New Connexion; Norfolk Street Wesleyan; Union Street Congregational.

Ilkley—Congregational,
Keighley—Alice Street Primitive Methodist; Cross Roads Primitive Methodist; Ebenezer;

Lane Primitive Methodist; Worth Wesleyan; Park Wood Street U.M.F.C.; Victoria Park Weslevan.

Kislingbury-Baptist.

Liscard—Congregational, Littleborough—Primitive Methodist.

Liverpool-Norwood Congregational. Maidstone-Union Street Wesleyan. Manchester-St. Andrew's Presbyterian.

Morecambe-United Methodist Free Church,

Measham

New Malden-Congregational.

Northampton-Queen's Road Wesleyan; Victoria Road Congregational.

Oxenhope - Horkinstone Baptist. Rochdale-Lowerfold United Methodist Free Church; Silver Street Wesleyan; Hallfold Congregational; Shawclough Zion Primitive Methodist Chapel; Milton Street Congregational P.S.A.

Ringstead-Baptist.

Royston-Kneesworth Street.

Rugby-Congregational,

Rushden-Old Baptist; Station Road Mission; Primitive Methodist; Independent Wesleyan; Park Road Wesleyan.

Sale-Congregational Church; Wesleyan.

Sheffield-Bethel.

Sowerby Bridge-Steep Lane Baptist; Congregational; Wesleyan, Smithy Bridge—United Methodist Free Church. Stackstead—Wesleyan,

Staines—Congregational. Stalybridge—Wesleyan. Sutton-Congregational.

Sutton-in-Craven-Baptist.

St. Mary Cray—Temple Congregational, Tonbridge—Wesleyan.

Uttoxeter—Wesleyan and Congregational.
Warwick—Brook Street Congregational.

Windsor-Baptist,

DR. McNAUGHT'S REPORT ON THE CHOIR COMPETITIONS.

CLASS A.

BILSTON WESLEYAN CHAPEL CHOIR.

(1) "In the beginning was the Word" (Darnton). An impressive start, dignified and reverent. Tone thin although not unpleasant. Execution clear and often Quartet (voices doubled). An agreeable performance although without special distinction. The expression was very carefully thought out. The last movement was particularly well sung rhythm might have had more light and shade. The restraint was praiseworthy, there were no exagger-

ations. The conducting was skilful.

(2) "Homeward" (Leslie). A charming performance, full of music and sincere chaste expression. The phrasing was most artistic and refined. Enunciation clear. Attack prompt and unanimous, Tenor a trifle too robust, but still the tone was musical, and if one or two more full basses could be added the blend would be improved. But the most was made of the resources. Kept pitch within a tone. Marks gained (maximum 120): Test piece, 51; own selection, 53. Total 104.

RUSHDEN OLD BAPTIST CHAPEL CHOIR.

(1) "In the beginning was the Word" (Darnton). A fine broad, rich, tone. Agreeable blend. The opening was duly dignified and solemn. Attack first rate a slight over eagerness of the trebles an occasional fault. Trebles excellent in quality. Quartet. This was beautifully sung without exaggeration of expression and with a duly reverential tone. Accent very praise-worthy. Intonation exact. Expression well considered and appropriate.

(2) "The Unseen Choir" (Dicks). Trebles again excel-nt. The blend would have been better if the basses had been more numerous and fuller. The basses did not seem so certain of their notes as the other parts. Bars 4, 8, "silent," the weak syllable too much marked here and in other places. Drill and attack were excellent. *Massioso*, bars 65-66, rather too much hurried. Lost breadth. The unison passage, bars 54-61, was disappointing. Much more could be made of this passage. Lost about half a tone. The general reading was intelligent, but the expression lacked breadth and grandeur. Marks: Test piece, 50; own selection, 51. Total 101.

LITTLEBORO' UNITED METHODIST FREE CHURCH CHOIR.

(I) "In the beginning was the Word" (Darnton). Unison opening fair, but without point. Harmony showed scarcely sufficient contrast. The voices were not full enough to secure a rich blend. Some voices sang with trouble. The singers generally were too much occupied with their copies. Quartet (doubled parts). A pretty performance, agreeable in tone and style. *Moderato*. Attack praiseworthy. Tone a little hard, and not a good blend. Trebles laboured at the

high notes. The end bars were well rendered.
(2) "Moonlight" (Faning). Pace rather fast. too much occupied with their books. The tone was pretty in the pianos, but unblendful in the fortes. The altos were excellent in some places, although not a good balance. The pp. at bars 44, 46 was beautiful, and the last page was delicately and artistically sung, withal much too fast. Could not hear first bass at the end. Kept pitch. Marks: Test piece, 45; own end. Kept pitch. I selection, 49; total, 94.

YORK STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH CHOIR, HEYWOOD.

(1) "In the beginning was the Word" (Darnton). A firm, decided attack, tone not very full, but it made a fair blend. Tone of trebles a little hard on top notes. Quartet. Soprano did not blend with the other voices. The intonation got very shaky. Otherwise the movement was well sung. Moderato. Rather fast. Rhythm excellent. Phrasing well defined. Expression generally not striking.

(2) "Strike the lyre" (S.A.T.B.) (Cooke.) Rather fast. Had a hurried effect. There was hardly time to nast. Had a nurried effect. There was hardly time to enunciate the words. Attack generally good. Blend fair, sometimes good. A virtue was the neat tapering off of rhythmic phrases. In the triple time the altos were far too much in evidence, but the other parts were beautifully subdued. The last movement was taken almost at same pace as the first movement. Kept nitch. The runs on last rage were offsetime although pitch. The runs on last page were effective, although occasionally smudgy. Marks: Test piece, 46; own selection, 46; total, 92.

STACKSTEADS WESLEYAN CHURCH CHOIR.

(1) "In the beginning was the Word" (Darnton). Opening good, marred by the sliding attack of some voices. Trebles slightly inclined to be shrill, and the basses rather breathy. Rhythmic attack excellent. Quartel. Musically sung, but without special ex-pression. The Moderato was sung with considerable finish. The attack was firm. The blend was good, but not first rate; the defects were owing to the chords

not always being in tune.

(2) "Moonlight" (Faning). Much too loud, and heavy at the opening. The voices were too pressed, and the tone too sostenuto—organ-like. The intona-tion at bars 27, 28, was shaky. The sopranos generally sang very well. The basses were deficient in places notably in bars 55-59, not having deep notes. Pace rather fast. The 1st basses sang F natural, last bar but one, instead of F flat. The end page calls for more

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Lost a whole tone. Expression not distinctive-inclined to be mechanical. Marks: Test piece, 45; own selection, 43; total, 88.

TRINITY WESLEYAN CHURCH CHOIR, CREWE.

(1) "In the beginning was the Word" (Darnton). The tone was too much mixed to blend well. The voices varied on the same vowel. More beauty of tone necessary. The opening unison was good, but not perfect, a few voices sliding. Attack otherwise excel-lent, and the expression was praiseworthy. Quartet taken full. The sforzandos were much exaggerated. Otherwise a smooth performance, Attack decided. In the end movement, the tone got a little rough in the fortes. The sopranos wavered in intonation at times. Expression fair.

(2) "Ar don o flaen gwyntoedd" ("I was tossad by the winds)." A lack of sympathetic expressive tone in the soprano was against the musical effect. Altos were scarcely a good balance. Attack fair, but sometimes loose. The vigour of the singing deserves notice. Bass not full enough. The expression was scarcely convincing; it did not seem born of feeling. Marks: Test piece, 43; own selection, 42; total 85.

TACKET STREET (IPSWICH) P.S.A. CHOIR.

(1) "In the beginning was the Word" (Darnton). Style rather heavy. Attack approaching indolence. Better at the end movement, but even here they did not always swing together. Tone often good—would be better if sweetened. Enunciation not a special point. It was hard to distinguish consonants. Quartet taken full. Was sung with fair delicacy. Expression throughout fair.

(2) "Sleep, gentle lady." Fair as to tone and tune. But the attack was loose and, as was said above, somewhat indolent. The choir lacks drill. There are plenty of good voices in it. The end was very well managed. Kept pitch. Marks: Test piece, 40; own selection, 42. Total, 82.

CLASS B.

HOPE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH CHOIR.

(I) "The Sun shall be no more" (Woodward). firm, full, agreeable tone. Attack solid. Intonat Intonation wavered, bars 20-24, and again at bars 43 to 47 and later again. Unison good. Soprani soli bars 52-60 rather heavy—some voices scooped initial notes of phrases. This was a frequent fault. Expression was phrases. This was a frequent faut.

creditable, but had no special distinction.

(2) "Luilaby of Life" (Leslie). Tone not nearly

creditable and the opening. Rhythm all strong

Weak syllables and weak accents were accents throughout pushed into prominence. Take bar 41 as example, "sink," second note of slur too prominent; bar 40, "ocean," second syllable too prominent. The tapering of phrases apparently not studied. The blend was fair, but the trebles sometimes peered out too much. The discipline was praiseworthy. The end page was really admirably sung, but the expression elsewhere calls for more refinement and delicacy. Sharpened a semitone. Marks: Test piece, 43; own selection, 46. Total, 89.

COMPSTALL PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHAPEL CHOIR.

(1) "The Sun shall be no more" (Woodward). Blend fair, but the tone was scarcely beautiful enough, Attack clear and decided. Fair unity throughout. Trebles a little shrill, and Altos tried to get too much tone. Expression fairly good. The accent was heavy; the light parts of the bar were too much in evidence. The pianos were sometimes excellent. Intonation praiseworthy. Enunciation careful.

(2) "The Parting Kiss" (Pinsuti). The tone of the Trebles stood out too much. They need more restraint. The men's voices were slightly nasal. Enunciation very careful. Discipline and rhythmic attack excellent. The tonal attack was sometimes not pure on initial notes of phrases. Expression rather mechanical (the piece calls for more tears), and the rhythm was again very heavy-this was the chief fault. Marks: Test piece, 45; own selection, 42; total, 87.

PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHAPEL CHOIR, HEANOR.

- (1) "The Sun shall be no more" (Woodward). Began piano, although the piece is marked mf. Tone fairly full, but lacked sweetness, especially in the Trebles. Altos not much in evidence. Attack generally good, but not always clear and finished. Bars 41 to 47 a little out of tune. The unison passage was well sung as to tone, but lumbering in rhythm. Expression careful, but not sufficiently sincere. Bar 125> too forcible.
- (2) "In this hour" (Pinsuti). Piece calls for more even rhythm and beautiful style. Too many and great liberties with the tempo. The great rush at bars 9 to 13 not good. Con energia does not mean accellerandi. The chipping off of phrases (as at bar 31, etc.) at times was the reverse of sentimental. Blend in pianos good, but in fortes not at all musical. The discipline of the choir was excellent. Kept pitch. Marks: Test piece, 43; own selection, 40; total 83.

Notes. Passing



HE recent Cromwell centenary celebrations have been the means of again directing attention to the Puritan view of music. Some musical historians have assumed that the Puritans suppressed all music whatsoever; but

that was by no means the case. That organs were removed from the churches is true; that choirs were disbanded is true; that the choir books of at least four cathedrals were destroyed is true; that the theatres were closed is true. But that the Puritans forbade or even discouraged music is certainly not true. They dislil ed the Cathedral service, and they disliked the organ, but there was some ground for their dislike in the abuses which were everywhere prevalent. Mr.

Henry Davey, in his " History of English Music," and indeed in a lecture delivered recently, has conclusively shown that before the Civil War, the organ was not even used to accompany the congregation, except in York Minster, and Thomas Mace quaintly describes the wonderful effect produced there when all joined in a psalm accompanied by the organ, a custom which he had never heard of in any other church. Had the organ been used as it is now to assist the congregational singing, the Puritans would have had no objection to church music. At the same time, it is somewhat difficult to defend the Puritans for their treatment of church music. It may have been a highly diverting amusement for Cromwell's soldiers to pull down the organs and barter the pipes for beer after blowing

them through the streets, but I should not think that the action helped anyone on the way to heaven. It was simply another phase of the ignorant Scottish prejudice which regarded the organ as an invention of the Evil One which was not to be allowed so much as standing room in the church.

Is the art of singing on the decline? Mr. Richard Davey, who describes himself as a musical critic of twenty years' standing, says it is. He says there is a falling off both in the number and quality of the singers of to-day. By singers Mr. Davey clearly means operatic singers. He looks back longingly to the time when London supported two opera houses, each with its galaxy tof stars-Titiens, Nilsson, Patti, Pauline Lucca, Ilma de Murska, Albani, Faure, Giuglini, Wachtel, Formes, Foli, Campanini, and the rest. That was thirty years ago, and ten years further back the list included Grisi, Sontag, Piccolomini, Jenny Lind, Persiani, Mario, Lablache, and Tamburini. Comparing these with the operatic artists of to-day Mr. Davey can find but four who are able to draw a big audience to Covent Garden-Melba, Calvé, Nordica, and Ternina. And he concludes that the genuine art of singing the vocalisation that was equal to the most trying fioriture of the Italian operatic school-is decaying, and that the appearances of really great singers on the musical horizon to-day are, like angels' visits, few and far between.

** How does Mr. Davey account for all this? Well, he has two solutions to offer. The first is the eagerness of the rising generation to make money as fast as possible, and to go before the public with a superficial vocal equipment that soon gives out, instead of the laboriously acquired technique which the older Italian masters used to impart by years of training. The second is the influence of the new school of music, and especially of Wagner, with his overburdened accompaniments, and his disregard for the frailty of the human voice. There is no doubt much truth in what Mr. Davey says. Nevertheless, if there are fewer first-rate artists now than in the palmy days of which he speaks, there is an enormously larger number of those who are very nearly first-rate. It must not therefore be assumed that, though for the moment the really great operatic singers can be counted on the fingers of two hands, the dearth has any deep significance. The probability is that in due season, as another musical critic has put it, the soulful singer with the cracked voice will be voted a consummate bore, and the German lyric an emotional enormity not to be endured in polite society. And in that day there may be a revival of the taste for the pure beauty of simple melody, when the world may witness a new shower of the musical comets whose disappearance Mr. Davey deplores.

When the ordinary reader, or for that matter the ordinary bookseller, speaks of current literature he seldom thinks of Hymnals. Yet of these an incredible number is sold. At the recent May meetings of the Scottish churches, for example, the reports showed that of the new "Church Hymnary" no fewer than

1,004,922 copies had been disposed of within the eight months since its publication in October last. In the Young Man for June there is a very interesting article from the pen of Mr. Shaylor. According to the writer's figures the hymn-books now most in favour are "Hymns Ancient and Modern," the Bishop of Exeter's "Hymnal Companion," "Church Hymns," "The People's Hymnal," Godfrey Thring's "Church of England Hymn-book," and "The Hymnary." It is interesting to recall the fact that when the volume of "Hymns Ancient and Modern" was first published in 1861 it contained only 273 hymns, but since then many additions have been made. The collection has been adopted by some ten thousand churches, and the sales aggregate about forty million copies, showing that hymns are even more popular than novels. Shaylor gives interesting particulars of other collections as well as of the writers of well-known hymns. The multitudes who are interested in hymnology will find the article one of the very best on the subject which has recently appeared. It has just one fault: it

A cynical philosopher, discussing the question of how far it is possible nowadays to do or to say something that has never been done or said before, declares that real originality can only be expected from a lunatic. That there is something in the suggestion I am fully persuaded after reading what Nietzsche has to say of Wagner and certain other notables in whom we are all more or less interested. It is impossible toavoid the suspicion that Nietzsche had a streak of madness in his genius, and I am not surprised to learn from the short biography prefixed to his last published volume that he "succumbed to a serious nervous disturbance which led to hopeless insanity and to a temporary confinement in a lunatic asylum," and that "since the summer of 1800 he has lived under the care of relatives at Naumburg." Nevertheless Nietzsche has given utterance to some remarkably clever things. His description of Rousseau, who composed the famous "Dream," as "a return to in impuris naturalibus," is excellent, and almost equally so is that of Carlyle as "pessimism as an undigested dinner." But it is in dealing with Wagner that Nietzsche shows the finest daring. He is an out-and-out anti-Wagnerian, with no more toleration for the master and his music than for Christianity. Wagner, he declares, is the artist of decadence, his music "perhaps the worst that has ever been made." The Wagnerian opera is the music of seduction and hypocrisy; nowhere in music will you find a more pleasant mode of enervating your mind, of forgetting your manliness under a rosebush! Other composers are content to let their music speak for itself; Wagner must write page after page about it and bore the world with his theories of philosophy and æsthetics. And so on in the same style. Uncle Toby declared that our armies swore terribly in Flanders, but even the Athanasian Creed is nothing. to Nietzsche on Wagner. Still it is enjoyable on the whole. The Wagner mania really needs some check, and these daring flights of Nietzsche diction are aslikely to be effective towards that end as anything I. J. CUTHBERT HADDEN.

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Echoes from the Churches.

A copy of "Christian Life in Song," price 5s., will be sent every month to the writer of the best paragraph under this heading. Paragraphs should be sent direct to the Editor by the 17th of the month. The winning paragraph in this issue is furnished by Mr. G. Dunning.

METROPOLITAN.

- BETHNAL GREEN.-Mr. Arthur Bayliss, A.R.C.M., organist and choirmaster of Trinity Congregational Church, Poplar, gave an organ recital at St. Paul's Church on June 8th, playing organ music by Mendelssohn, Hesse, Guilmant, and Wely, and arrangements from the works of Gounod and Meyerbeer to a

large congregation.

FULHAM.—The annual meeting of the choir was recently held, when Josiah Booth, Esq., presided. A record of useful work was presented by the secretary, Mr. F. S. Turney, and the cash account was reported as "on the right side." Mr. Booth gave a very interesting speech from the chair on the cosmopolitan character of music and musicians, and claimed on behalf of the divine art a useful place in the world's efforts for universal peace. It was impossible, he said, to wish to fight a man after having listened to some excellent music from his pen-even if he had been born in another country, and the principle being further extended would embrace whole populations, or at least the portion (and that a very considerable one), to whom music appealed. The pastor (Rev. H. J. Shirley), expressed the thanks of the choir and church at Mr. Booth's kindness in presiding, and took occasion also to thank the choir for their work during the year. The to thank the choir for their work during the year. musical programme consisted of Christ and His Soldiers, with small orchestra, the principals being furnished by members of the choir. "Choir Sunday" was made the occasion of an excellent "with its angle the occasion of an excellent the occasion of a constant the occasion of an excellent the occasion of a constant the occasio was made the occasion of an excellent "musical" address by the pastor with the evening collection being devoted to the Choir Fund. The music at the short "musical service" after the sermon consisted of solos by Miss Louie Hine-Butcher, "God is a Spirit" (quartet), and choruses by the choir, among the latter being Darnton's "I will sing of the Mercies of the Lord," which proved extremely popular, the splendid "swing" of the final movement being most effective.

POPLAR.—On Sunday, May 28th, a selection from the Messiah was sung at Trinity Congregational Church. The solo numbers were well sung by Miss Florence Wadlow, Miss Blanche Smith, and Mr. Charles Veness. Mr. Arthur Bayliss, A.R.C.M., played the accompaniments, and directed the music. We understand that a Bazaar will be held, the proceeds of which are to be devoted to re-building the organ in this church, which is almost worn out, having done duty since

SOUTHWARK .- On Sunday evening, May 28th, at the conclusion of the ordinary service, the choir of Park Wesleyan Church, with the assistance of some members of the Bermondsey Settlement Choral Society, gave a selection of pieces from Mendelssohn's St. Paul in a manner which reflected great credit on themselves, and which gave great satisfaction and delight to the large congregation assembled to hear them. The opening chorus, "Lord, Thou alone art God," was most impressive, and was exceedingly well rendered, the leads being well taken up by the warious parts. This was followed by the chorale, "To God on High," "Take him away," "Happy and blest are they," "Sleepers, wake," "The Lord, He is good," "How lovely are the messengers," and "O great is the depth," all of which were rendered in a way which betokened careful and painstaking training, and at the same time evinced intelligent interpretation on the part of the choir. The various choruses were, of course, interspersed with solos and recitatives,

these being given by Miss Florence Morgan (soprano), Mr. Bert Pearce (tenor), and Mr. W. Seemer Betts (bass), and a special word of praise is due to each of these for the really admirable way in which they sang, assisting greatly to the success of the service. Miss Morgan's rendering of "Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets," and "I will sing of Thy great mercies" left nothing to be desired, being most expressively sung, whilst her various recits. were, as usual, characterised by great precision. Mr. Bert Pearce, who was again a most welcome visitor, fully deserved the high enconiums bestowed upon him, his singing, despite the fact that he was suffering from an attack of influenza, being highly appreciated, particularly his solo, "Be thou faithful unto death" and his duet with Mr. Betts, "Now we are ambassadors." Mr. Betts, who undertook the bass solos, was likewise exceedingly good, the solo, "Consume them all," being given with the necessary force and vigour, whilst "O God, have mercy" was sung with great expression, and was much enjoyed, as was also the solo, "I praise Thee, O God." This musical service was undoubtedly the best yet given by the choir, and the work done, particularly the singing of "O great is the depth," afforded satisfactory proof of the improvement which has been steadily going on. The choirmaster, Mr. J. W. Thompson, conducted, being most ably assisted at the organ by Mr. A. W. Stubbs.

TOLLINGTON PARK.—A very enjoyable programme of music entitled "An Evening with Gound" was given was given at the New Court Congregational Church, N., on Tuesday, June 6th, by the New Court Choir, assisted by Madame Lilla Harrison, Mrs. Tetley, Mrs. Albert Williams, Miss Emilie Dettmer (violin) and Mr. Donald Keil. The cantata, Gallia, "O sing to God" (Noel), portions of The Redemption, and various songs and solos were effectively rendered under the direction of Mr. Harrison White, organist and choirmaster. This is the second of a series, the first evening being

devoted to Mendelssohn's works.

UPPER HOLLOWAY .- The Baptist C. E. Society held another of its popular Thursday Evening Socials on June 8th, and was well attended by a large and appreciative audience, including a large number of strangers. The musical programme was, as usual, under the control of its popular, young, but able musical conductor, Mr. M. L. Carter, who throws himself with untiring energy into anything he takes in hand, and we congratulate the Society on obtaining his services. The programme was sustained by Miss Florrie Smith, Miss J. Greenwood, Mr. Harold Claxton, Mr. J. Middleton, Miss Ethel Jackson, and Miss Ethel Parker. During the evening the C. E. choir, of twenty-five voices, gave an excellent rendering of several anthems. The items of the evening, however, were the two quartettes "Hark, the Angelus" and "Sweet and Low," these being excellently rendered, both calling for encores. The voices of Miss Jessie Parker, who possesses a fine soprano, and Mr. M. L. Carter, a sweet tenor, blending especially well together.

PROVINCIAL,

BROMLEY (Kent).-The choir of the Baptist church here have had a busy spring. On May 31st they gave their second concert of the season, when a large and appreciative audience assembled. The nucleus of the programme was supplied by the choir, Bishop's "Sleep, Gentle Lady" and Smart's "Evening" being particu-

larly well rendered. The audience-supported by the local press—were unanimous in recognising the marked improvement shown by the choir. Vocal solos were improvement shown by the choir. Vocal solos were agreeably rendered by Mrs. J. H. Maunder, Mr. Walter Inglis, and Mr. Bertram Pearce, all of whom are well-known favourites in the town. Their efforts on this occasion certainly tended to retain their popularity. Miss G. R. Shallard and Mr. S. H. Bacon-members of the choir-also assisted vocally; and the choir is to be congratulated on possessing such promising soloists. Miss Edith Pearce is always welcome as a reciter, and her selection from "Martin Chuzzlewit" was undoubtedly the "hit" of the evening. Mr. Mills Francis (violin), Mr. P. Ranson, and Mr. T. Chambers (piano) gave valuable assistance. On June 2ndl some special music was selected and given in recognition of the eightieth birthday of Queen Victoria; and on the evening of June 11th a special service of festival music was given in celebration of the fourth anniversary of the settlement of the pastor, Rev. R. Silvey, A.T.S. Mendelssohn's "Festgesang" was the chief choral work, and was rendered with the power, sustained force, and joyous spirit appropriate to the work and the occasion. For a small choir, the tone obtained, particularly in No. 3, was excellent. "O praise the Lord of Heaven," and "See what Love" (St. Paul) were also creditably given. Mr. W. Gale gave two excellent solos, Mr. T. Chambers accompanied with good judgment, and Mr. Bertram Pearce, upon whom all the responsibility of this work rested, conducted.

KINGSBRIDGE, SOUTH DEVON.—A new organ by Mr. Sims, of Ryde, was opened by Mr. Minshall, in the Congregational Church on Thursday, the 8th ult. There was a Dedicatory Service in the afternoon, conducted by the Pastor, the Rev. Rhys Harries, the zealous organist of the Church, Mr. C. H. Balkwill accompanying the choir. A recital was given in the evening before a large audience. Miss Drew, a member evening before a large audience. Miss Drew, a member of the choir, gave a nice rendering of "Let the Bright Seraphim," and "Sunshine and Rain;" Mr. J. Richards sang with much vigour "Sound an Alarm," and "My Hope is in the Everlasting," Miss Elsie Blake, an accomplished violinist, delighted the audience with "Walter's Prize Song (Wagner). The choir, under Mr. Balkwill's direction, sang with spirit "Soldiers of Christ Arise" (Minshall). The entire proceedings were marked with much enthesisem. were marked with much enthusiasm.

KINGSTON.—The Congregational Church has recently been renovated, and the electric light introduced. The re-opening services took place on May 28th. After the evening service a musical service was held, when Mendelssohn's Festgesang was sung. Miss Louise Weaver gave a solo.

Long Eaton.—The anniversary of the St. John's Baptist Sunday School was held on Sunday, June 11th. The service in the morning was conducted by the pastor, the Rev. Evan Webb, and in the evening by the Rev. A. H. Coombs, B.A., of Melbourne, who also gave a very appropriate address. In the afternoon a "Children's Musical Festival" was held. These afternoon festivals are a special feature at the anniversary of each of the price Noncompreniet Sunday Schools of the each of the nine Nonconformist Sunday Schools of the town, and probably owing to a little musical rivalry the singing is generally of exceptional merit. Hitherto this school has held a prominent place in this respect, and its reputation was fully maintained. The scholars sang "Jesus, high in glory" (A. Ward), "Echo Praise" (G. Lister), and "The Children's Offering" in capital style. The latter piece was composed by the late organist, Mr. F. H. Wood (now of Blackburn). The solo was sweetly sung by Miss Ida Parker. The principal feature of the service, however, was the rendering of the following anthems:—"The Bread of Life," by Thomas Facer; "Christ's Death and Resurrection," by Henry Dennis;

and "Come, Christian Youths and Maidens," by Arthur Berridge. The singing of these anthems evinced very careful preparation and, though somewhat difficult, afforded splendid musical training for the young people. At the close the Hallelujah Chorus was sung people. At the close the Hallelujah Chorus was sung admirably by the choir and congregation. The accompaniments were played by Mr. F. H. Wood (organist), and a strong orchestra. Altogether the service was an enjoyable one, and the singing reflects very great credit on Mr. H. H. Hooper, who conducted and had charge of the training of the children and choir.

OUTLANE (near Huddersfield). — The anniversary services in connection with the Wesleyan Sundayschool were held on Sunday, June 11th, when sermons were preached morning and afternoon by the Rev. W. W. Ward, of Linthwaite, and Rev. W. Arrowsmith, of Lindley. Special hymns and anthems were rendered by the scholars and choir, the latter augmented for the occasion under the able conductorship of Mr. Eli Pilling, accompanied on the organ by Mr. J. W. Batley, and an efficient orchestral band. The anthems Batley, and an efficient orchestral band. The anthems for the afternoon and evening services were "Praise the Lord, for He is gracious" (Mozart's 12th Mass) and "Blessed be Thou, Lord God of Israel" (Kent), the verse parts in the latter being effectively rendered by Mrs. Gee, Miss Pilling, Mr. T. Hallas, and Mr. J. W. Pilling. The evening service was brought to a close by a magnificent rendering of Handel's Hallelujah Chorus.

Staccato Notes.

JOHN STRAUSS, the well-known waltz writer, is dead. The royalties on his compositions yielded about £3,000 per annum.
PADEREWSKI has married again. He has one child

-a son-by his first wife.

SIR HUBERT H. PARRY presided at the annual dinner of the R.C.O. He advocated a permanent home being provided for the college.

Promenade Concerts will be given in the Covent

Garden Opera House in the autumn, and Mr. Newman will give similar concerts in the Queen's Hall,

SIR HUBERT PARRY is to have the D.C.L. degree

conferred on him at Oxford.

THE Westminster Orchestral Society during fourteen years has been the means of bringing to notice many promising artists who might otherwise not have obtained a public hearing. This was exemplified on the 2nd ult., when the Society brought forward a composer, a pianist, and a singer, all young and all displaying remarkable talent. The first, Mr. Clarence Lucas, contributed an overture to "Othello," a masterly piece of orchestration which greatly de-lighted a crowded audience; the second, Mr. Harold Garstin, played the pianoforte part in Schumann's Concertstuck with orchestra, and played wonderfully well; but the third performer received most applause. This was Miss Jeanne Smalt, a young soprano singer, who sang songs in Italian, French, Dutch, and English.

To Correspondents.

A. R. C. O.—We cannot tell you of any London organ with the self-balancing Swell Pedal. Some of the largest organ building firms could probably give you the information. We cannot recommend this pedal, however.

B. T. J.—It is an American publication. W. W.—By all means join an amateur orchestra. It

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FESTIVAL" ANTHEMS

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GEO. SHINN, Mus. Bac, says :- "I consider this is one of Mr. Darnton's best."

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,, 4.—BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL. G. RAYLEIGH VICARS. 2d.; Tonic Sol-fa, id. "Interesting setting, . . . simple and expressive."

*,, 5.—I WILL SING OF THE MERCIES OF THE LORD FOR EYER (Festival). Chas. Darnton. 3d.; Tonic Sol-fa, 2d.

"One of the best anthems we have seen for a long time, and will well repay any attention bestowed upon it."—Methodist New Connexion Magazine.

" 6.—OH, LOYE THE LORD (For Quartet and Chorus). ARTHUR J. JAMOUNEAU. 2d.; Chorus). ARTHU Tonic Sol-fa, 13d.

" 7.—JESUS, THOU SOUL OF ALL OUR JOYS (For Choir Festivals and other occasions). ARTHUR BERRIDGE. 2d;; Tonic Sol-fa, 13d.

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Ju

Adagio Medita

larly well rendered. The audience-supported by the local press-were unanimous in recognising the marked improvement shown by the choir. Vocal solos were agreeably rendered by Mrs. J. H. Maunder, Mr. Walter Inglis, and Mr. Bertram Pearce, all of whom are well-known favourites in the town. Their efforts on this occasion certainly tended to retain their popularity. Miss G. R. Shallard and Mr. S. H. Bacon—members of the choir—also assisted vocally; and the choir is to be congratulated on possessing such promising soloists. Miss Edith Pearce is always welcome as a reciter, and her selection from "Martin Chuzzlewit" was undoubtedly the "hit" of the evening. Mr. Mills Francis (violin), Mr. P. Ranson, and Mr. T. Chambers (piano) gave valuable assistance. On June 2nd! some special music was selected and given in recognition of the eightieth birthday of Queen Victoria; and on the evening of June 11th a special service of festival music was given in celebration of the fourth anniversary of the settlement of the pastor, Rev. R. Silvey A.T.S. Mendelssohn's "Festgesang" was the chie was the chief choral work, and was rendered with the power, sustained force, and joyous spirit appropriate to the work and the occasion. For a small choir, the tone obtained, particularly in No. 3, was excellent. "O praise the Lord of Heaven," and "See what Love" (St. Paul) were also creditably given. Mr. W. Gale gave two excellent solos, Mr. T. Chambers accompanied with good judgment, and Mr. Bertram Pearce, upon whom all the responsibility of this work rested, conducted.

KINGSBRIDGE, SOUTH DEVON .-- A new organ by Mr. Sims, of Ryde, was opened by Mr. Minshall, in the Congregational Church on Thursday, the 8th ult. There was a Dedicatory Service in the afternoon, conducted by the Pastor, the Rev. Rhys Harries, the zealous organist of the Church, Mr. C. H. Balkwill accompanying the choir. A recital was given in the evening before a large audience. Miss Drew, a member of the choir, gave a nice rendering of "Let the Bright Seraphim," and "Sunshine and Rain;" Mr. J. Richards sang with much vigour "Sound an Alarm," and "My Hope is in the Everlasting," Miss Elsie Blake, an accomplished violioist, delighted the audience with "Walter's Prize Song (Wagner). The chair walter "Walter's Prize Song (Wagner). The choir, under Mr. Balkwill's direction, sang with spirit "Soldiers of Christ Arise" (Minshall). The entire proceedings were marked with much enthusiasm.

KINGSTON.—The Congregational Church has recently been renovated, and the electric light introduced. The re-opening services took place on May 28th. After the evening service a musical service was held, when Mendelssohn's Festgesang was sung. Miss Louise Weaver gave a solo.

LONG EATON.—The anniversary of the St. John's Baptist Sunday School was held on Sunday, June 11th. The service in the morning was conducted by the pastor, the Rev. Evan Webb, and in the evening by the Rev. A. H. Coombs, B.A., of Melbourne, who also gave a very appropriate address. In the afternoon a "Children's Musical Festival" was held. These afternoon festivals are a special feature at the anniversary of each of the pine Nonconformist Sunday Schools of the each of the nine Nonconformist Sunday Schools of the town, and probably owing to a little musical rivalry the singing is generally of exceptional merit. Hitherto this school has held a prominent place in this respect, and its reputation was fully maintained. The scholars sang "Jesus, high in glory" (A. Ward), "Echo Praise" (G. Lister), and "The Children's Offering" in capital style. The latter piece was composed by the late organist, Mr. F. H. Wood (now of Blackburn). The solo was sweetly sung by Miss Ida Parker. The principal feature of the service, however, was the rendering of the following anthems:—"The Bread of Life," by Thomas Facer; "Christ's Death and Resurrection," by Henry Dennis;

and "Come, Christian Youths and Maidens," by Arthur Berridge. The singing of these anthems evinced very careful preparation and, though somewhat difficult, careful preparation and, though somewhat difficult, afforded splendid musical training for the young people. At the close the Hallelujah Chorus was sung admirably by the choir and congregation. The accompaniments were played by Mr. F. H. Wood (organist), and a strong orchestra. Altogether the service was an enjoyable one, and the singing reflects very great credit on Mr. H. H. Hooper, who conducted and had charge of the training of the children and choir. choir.

OUTLANE (near Huddersfield). — The anniversary services in connection with the Wesleyan Sundayschool were held on Sunday, June 11th, when sermons were preached morning and afternoon by the Rev. W. W. Ward, of Linthwaite, and Rev. W. Arrowsmith, of Lindley. Special hymns and anthems were rendered by the scholars and choir, the latter augmented for the occasion under the able conductorship of Mr. Eli Pilling, accompanied on the organ by Mr. J. Batley, and an efficient orchestral band. The anthems for the afternoon and evening services were "Praise the Lord, for He is gracious" (Mozart's 12th Mass) and "Blessed be Thou, Lord God of Israel" (Kent), by a magnificent rendering of Handel's Hallelujah Chorus.

Staccato Notes.

JOHN STRAUSS, the well-known waltz writer, is dead. The royalties on his compositions yielded about £3,000 per annum.
PADEREWSKI has married again. He has one child

a son-by his first wife.

SIR HUBERT H. PARRY presided at the annual dinner of the R.C.O. He advocated a permanent home

PROMENADE Concerts will be given in the Covent Garden Opera House in the autumn, and Mr. Newman

will give similar concerts in the Queen's Hall.
SIR HUBERT PARRY is to have the D.C.L. degree

conferred on him at Oxford. THE Westminster Orchestral Society during fourteen years has been the means of bringing to notice many promising artists who might otherwise not have obtained a public hearing. This was exemplified on the 2nd ult., when the Society brought forward a composer, a pianist, and a singer, all young and all displaying remarkable talent. The first, Mr. Clarence Lucas, contributed an overture to "Othello," a masterly piece of orchestration which greatly de-lighted a crowded audience; the second, Mr. Harold Garstin, played the pianoforte part in Schumann's Concertstuck with orchestra, and played wonderfully well; but the third performer received most applause. This was Miss Jeanne Smalt, a young soprano singer, who sang songs in Italian, French, Dutch, and English.

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